

HODDER DARGAUD PRESENTS



TEXT: GOSCINNY
DRAWINGS: UDERZO

Asterix

and CAESAR'S Gift



OUR STORY OPENS MELODIOUSLY IN A BAR IN A DISREPUTABLE PART OF ROME. AS THEY USED TO SAY IN THE COLLOQUIAL IDIOM OF THE TIME, 'VINUM ET MUSICA LAETIFICANT COR'...

♪ AND WHEN I'M DEAD DON'T BURY ME AT ALL, ♪ JUST PICKLE MY BONES IN ALCOHOL. AN AMPHORA OF WINE AT MY HEAD AND FEET. AT MY HEAD AND FEET. AND THEN I'M SURE MY BONES WILL KEEP....

HIC!... DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM!

KISS ME GOODNIGHT, CENTURION... CENTURION, BE A MATER TO ME...

SHUT UP, TREMENDOUSLY DELICIOUS, YOU'LL BRING THE PATROL DOWN ON US!

PATROL? HUH! WHAT'S THE PATROL MATTER? WE'RE FINISHED WITH PATROLS!

NOT QUITE, WE AREN'T, SO CALM DOWN!

HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE IN THE ARMY?

TWENTY YEARS, SAME AS EVERYONE ELSE. AND TOMORROW JULIUS CAESAR'S GIVING US OUR HONESTA MISSION! WITH A FREE GIFT OF A PLOT OF LAND TOO!

* DEMOS

JULIUS CAESAR! HUH! WANT TO KNOW WHAT I THINK OF JULIUS CAESAR?

SOON AFTERWARDS...



HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE THEN, SON?

TWO YEARS.

ONLY EIGHTEEN MORE TO GO, SON! THE ENDS IN SIGHT!

YES! THIS TIME XVIII YEARS WHERE SHALL I BE? NOT IN THE ROMAN INFANTRY!

* OLD ROMAN ARMY SONG, AN ADAPTATION OF WHICH IS STILL CURRENT IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS TODAY.

NEXT MORNING, IN JULIUS CAESAR'S PALACE...



WELL, CENTURION, SO SOME OF OUR VETERANS GET THEIR HONESTA MISSIO TODAY. ALL MEN WITH GOOD CONDUCT RECORDS, I HOPE?

YES, THEY'VE DONE FINE, O JULIUS CAESAR... BARRING ONE OLD SOAK WHO HASN'T BEEN SOBER IN TWENTY YEARS.

IN FACT HE'S IN THE GLASSHOUSE THIS VERY MOMENT. HE WAS USING INSULTING LANGUAGE ABOUT YOU LAST NIGHT.

INSULTING LANGUAGE, EH? WELL, I'VE GOT AN IDEA... WE'LL HAVE A SPOT OF FUN WITH HIM!



GET HIM OUT OF PRISON AND HAVE HIM LINED UP FOR THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY ALONG WITH THE REST.

YOU'RE GOING TO THROW HIM TO THE LIONS, O CAESAR?



WORSE! I'M GOING TO GIVE HIM A PRESENT!

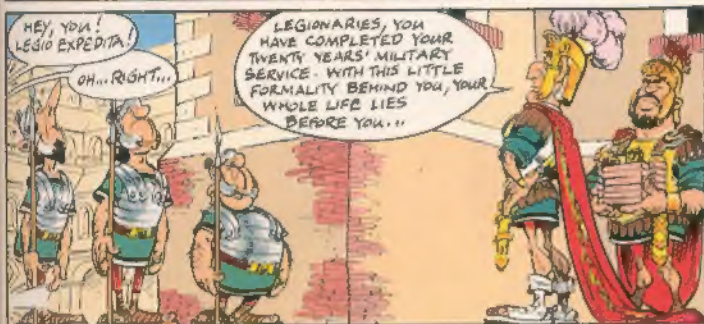


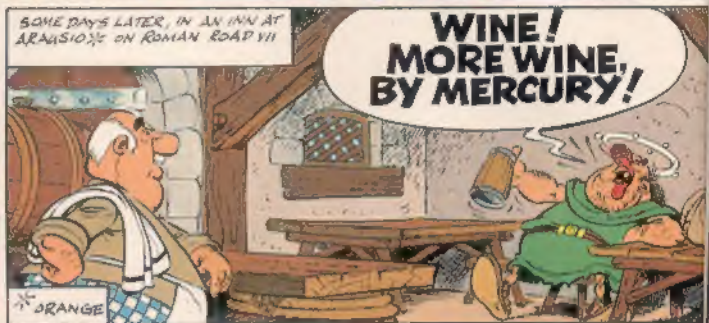
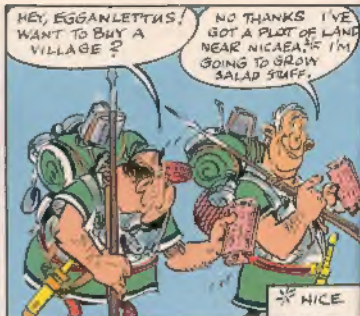
SOME HOURS LATER...

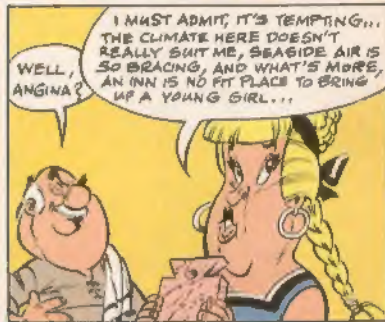
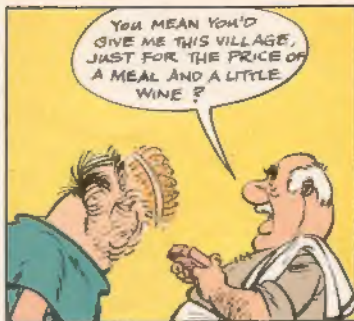
ATTEN-SHUN!



**LEGIO
EXPEDITA!**







YES, A TYPICAL LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE, COMPLETE WITH WARRIORS, CRAFTSMEN, TRADESMEN, DRUID AND BARD...

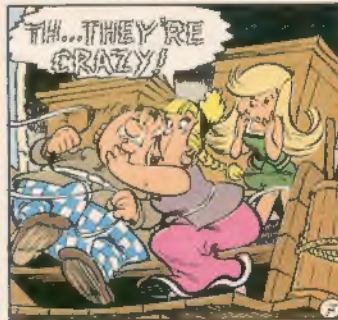
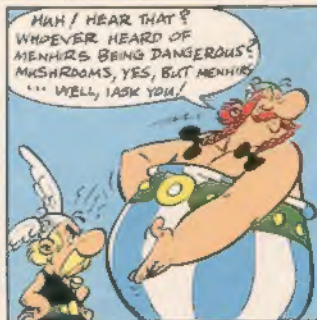
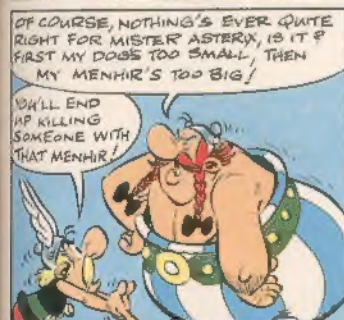
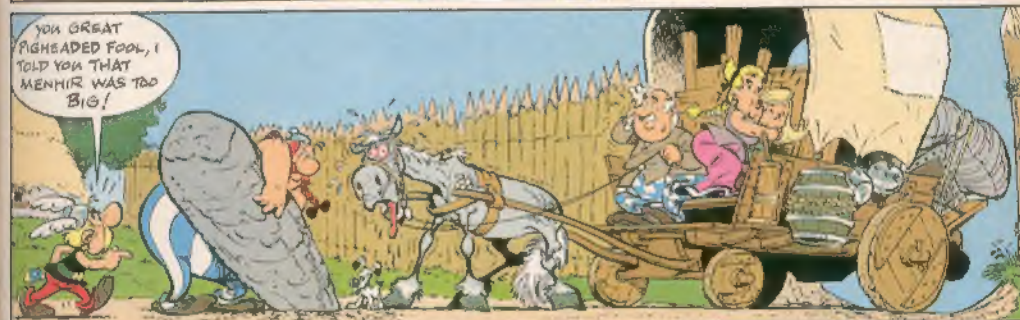
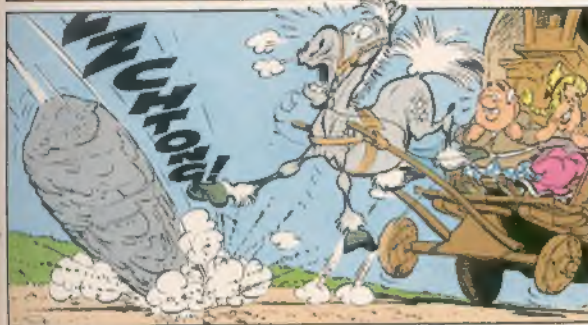
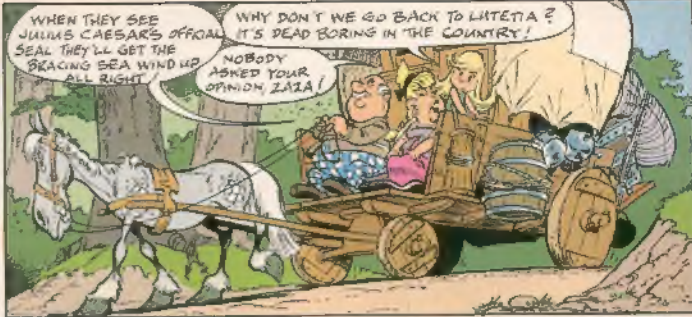
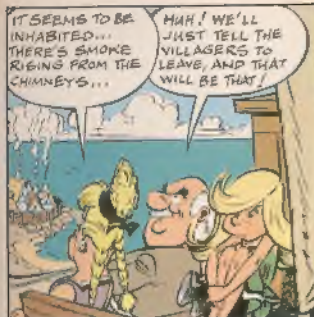


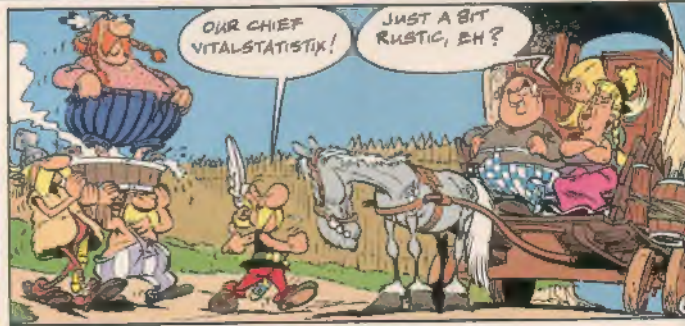
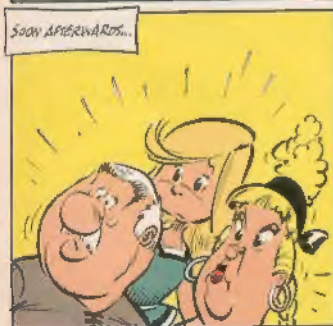
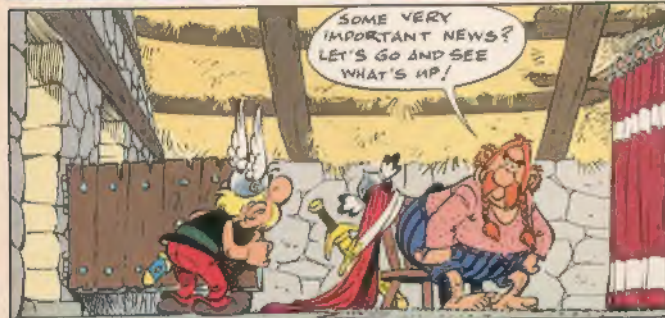
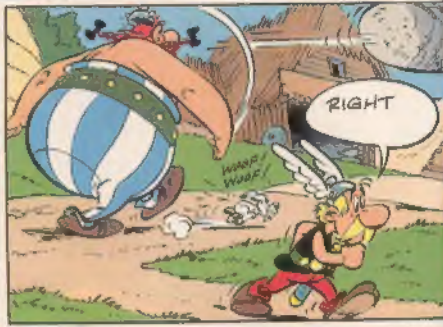
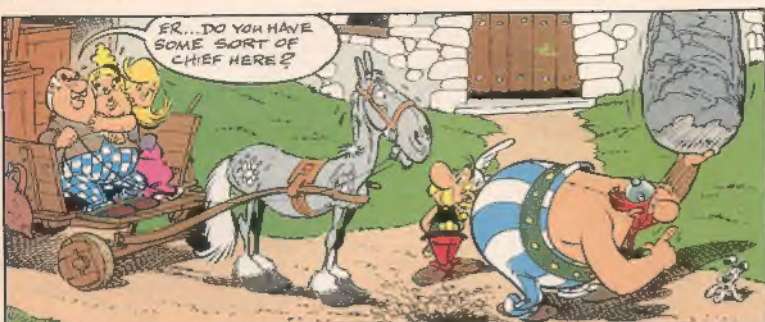
... AND A CHIEF WHO IS EASY GOING, THOUGH INCLINED TO STAND ON CEREMONY...

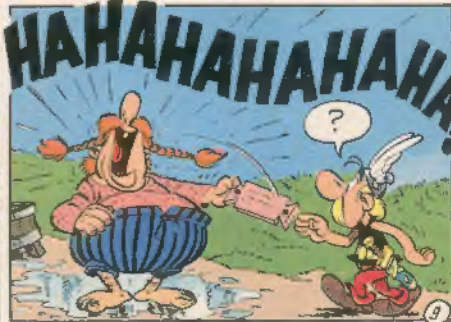


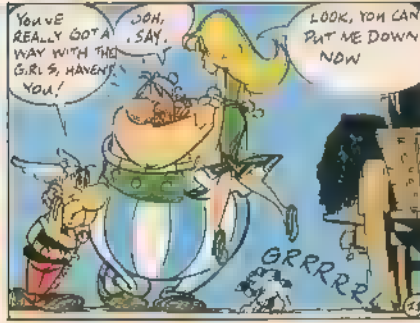
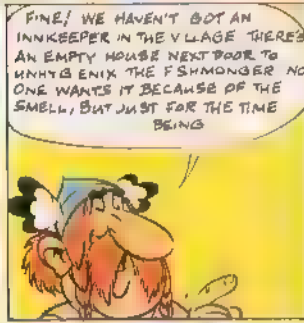
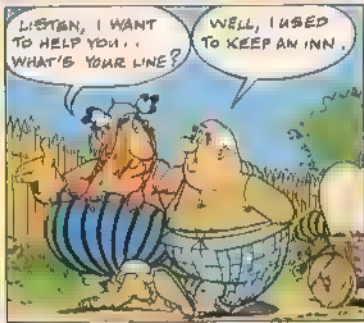
BUT DIDN'T I FORBID YOU TO SNEEZE WHEN CARRYING ME?

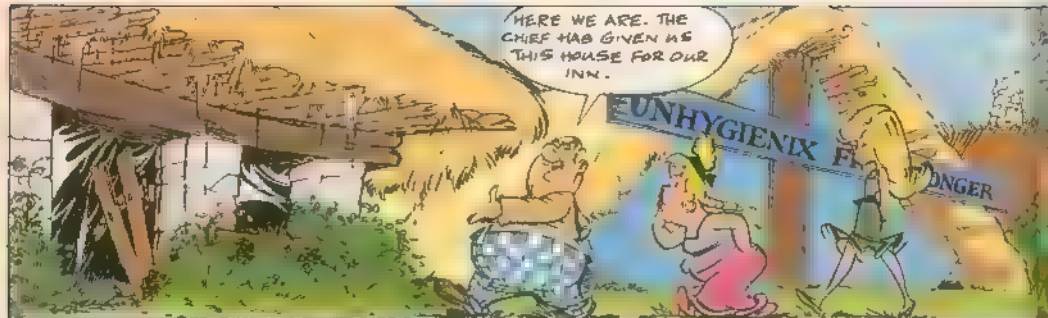












WHAT? YOU MEAN WE'VE LEFT OUR NICE INN AT ARAUSIO JUST TO OPEN ANOTHER IN THIS WRETCHED VILLAGE, WHEN THE WHOLE PLACE BELONGS TO US ANYWAY?

BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE US THE VILLAGE!

OH LET'S GO BACK TO UNCLE DITHYRAMB IN LUTETA!

NO. NO! WE SHALL BE VERY COMFORTABLE HERE AND THE AIR'S BRACING

BRACING? IT STINKS OF ROTTEN FISH!

WE'LL AIR THE HOUSE OUT. ANYWAY, THAT'S THE SMELL OF THE SEA

IT'S SOME TIME SINCE ANY FISH SMELLING LIKE THAT SAW THE SEA!

IT'S FUN HAVING NEW PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE, ISN'T IT, SETAFIX?

WELL, I HAVE A NOTION WE SHAN'T BE BORED. EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THEM ANYWAY

SHE'S ALMOST AS LIGHT AS YOU, DOGMATIX!

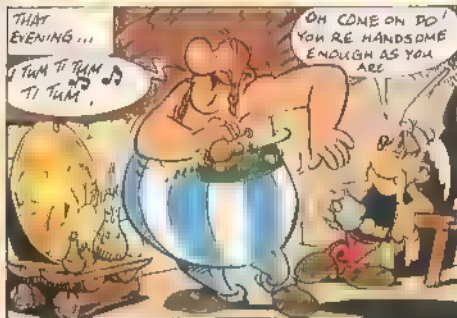
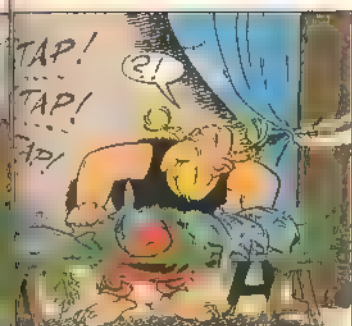
GRRRR!

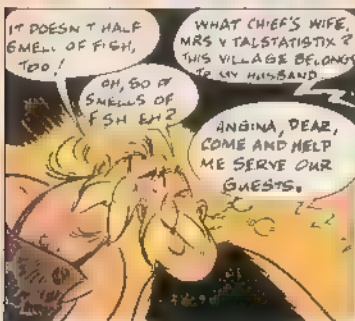
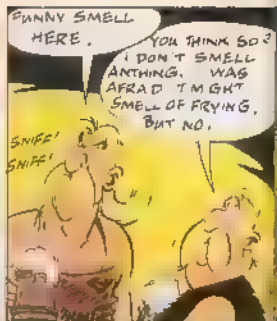
OBELIX QUARRY

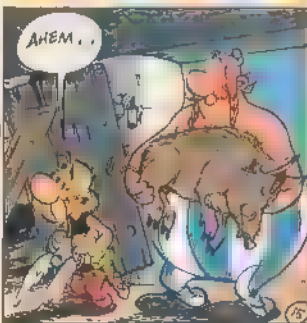
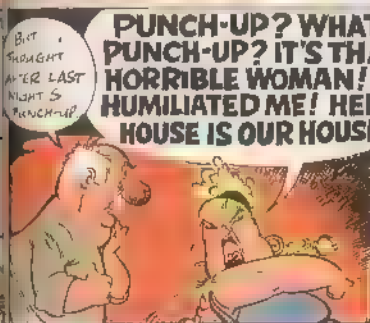
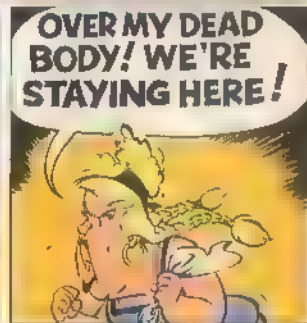
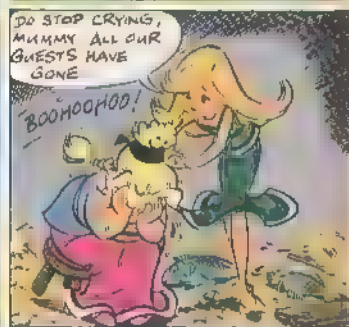
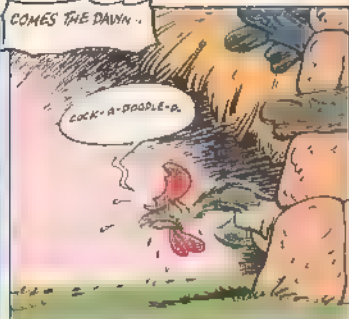
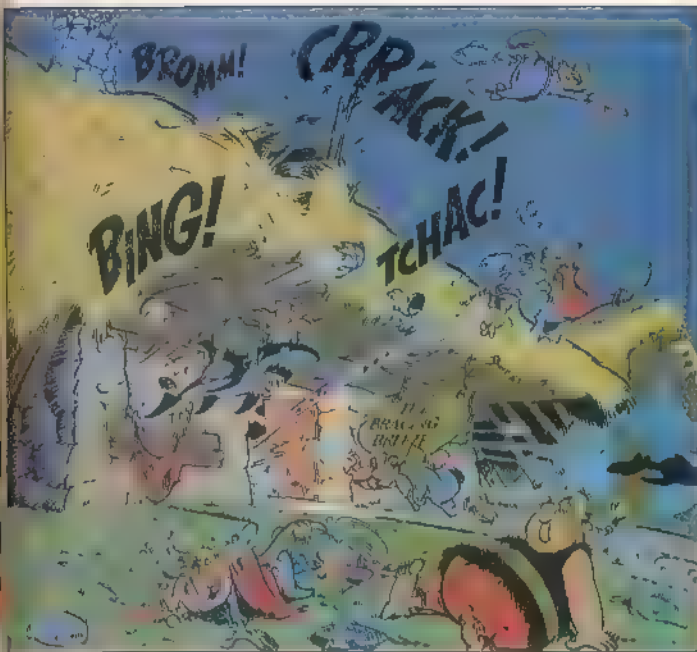
NEW PEOPLE? WHAT NEW PEOPLE?

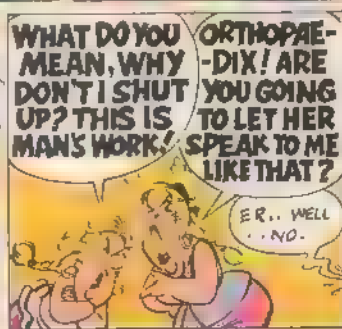
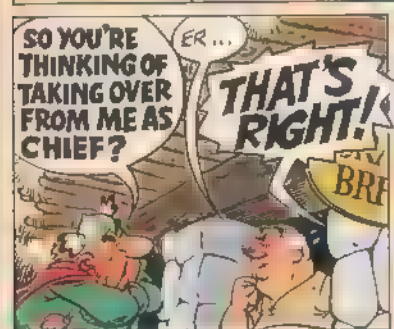
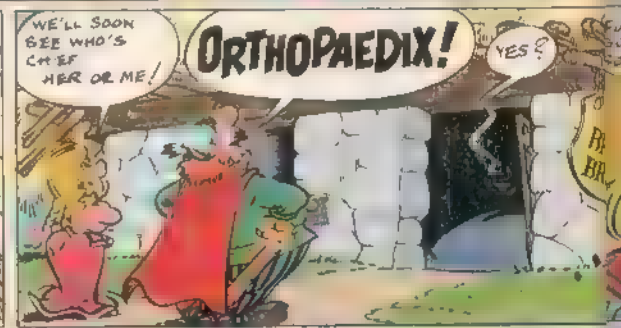
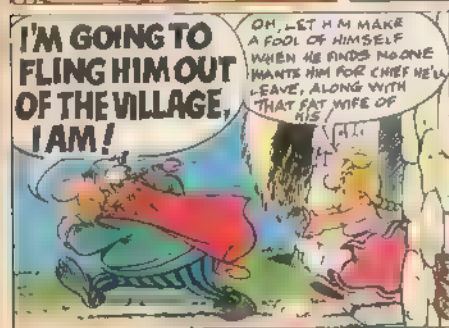
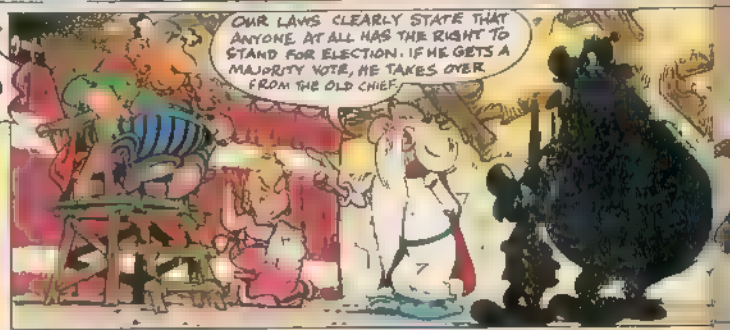
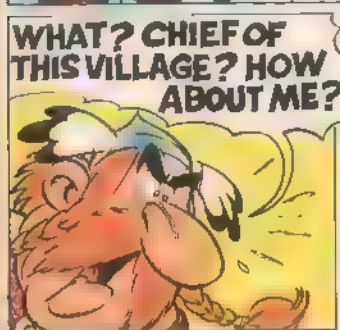
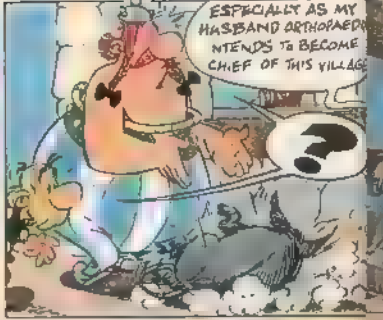
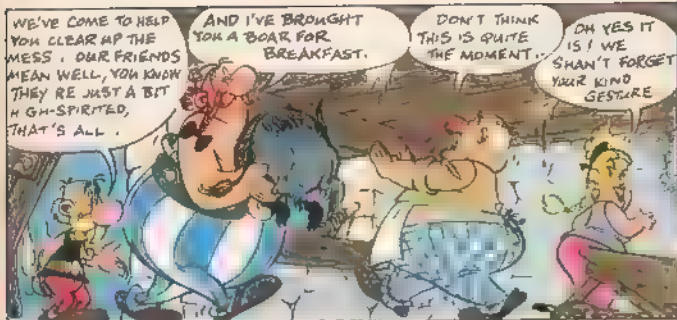
YOU KNOW ME, I'VE GOT NOTHING AGAINST FOREIGNERS. SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE FOREIGNERS, BUT THESE PARTICULAR FOREIGNERS AREN'T FROM THIS VILLAGE!

AS FOR THAT GIRL SHE HAS THE MOST APPALLING TASTE









YOU WANTED ME, VITALSTATISTIX?

THAT'S RIGHT, CACOPHONY...
I'VE GOT A LITTLE JOE
FOR YOU.

IT'S NOT THAT I DOUBT THEIR
LOYALTY, EXACTLY. BUT I'D LIKE
YOU TO SOUND OUT OUR
FRIENDS: SEE IF THEY WANT
A CHANGE OF CHIEF

LATER...

WELL,
WHAT
NEWS?

GERIATRIX IS BACKING YOU. HE
SAYS HE'S GOT NOTHING AGAINST
FOREIGNERS BUT THEY DON'T
BELONG HERE. THE OTHERS DON'T
MIND ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SO
LONG AS THEY STILL GET PLENTY OF
BOARDS AND ROMANS...

FREE AUTOMATIX THOUGHT I WAS
GOING TO SOUND HIM OUT IN SONG
SO HE KNOCKED ME OUT FIRST

YOU HAVEN'T
VOICED YOUR
OWN OPINION
YET?

HUH! YOU DON'T LIKE MY
VOICE ANY MORE THAN
THE REST OF THEM.

WHAT, ME?
I SIMPLY
LOVE YOUR
VOICE

YOU DO? I LISTEN TO
THIS NEW PROTEST SONG
I'VE JUST COMPOSED
THEM!!!

WE SHALL
OVERCOME...
WE SHALL
OVER-
COME...

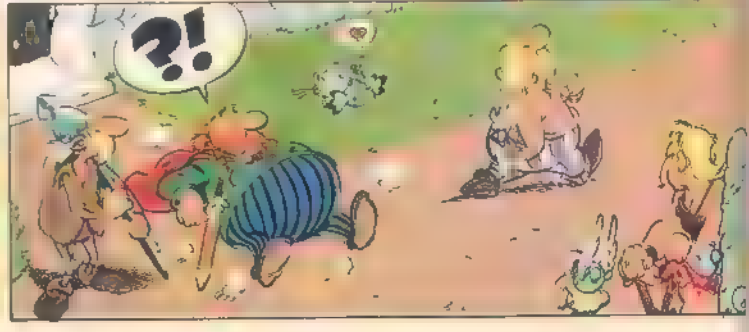
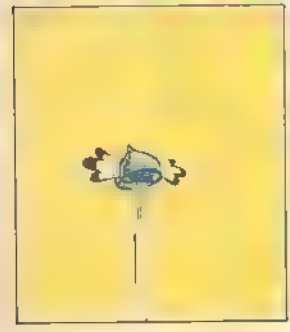
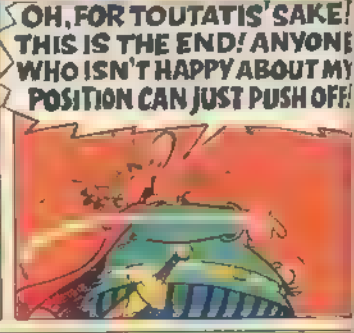
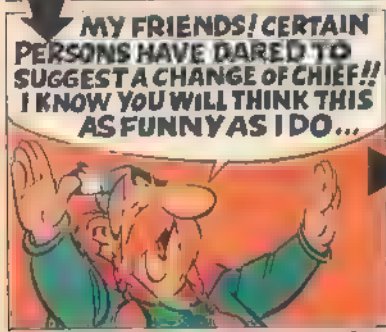
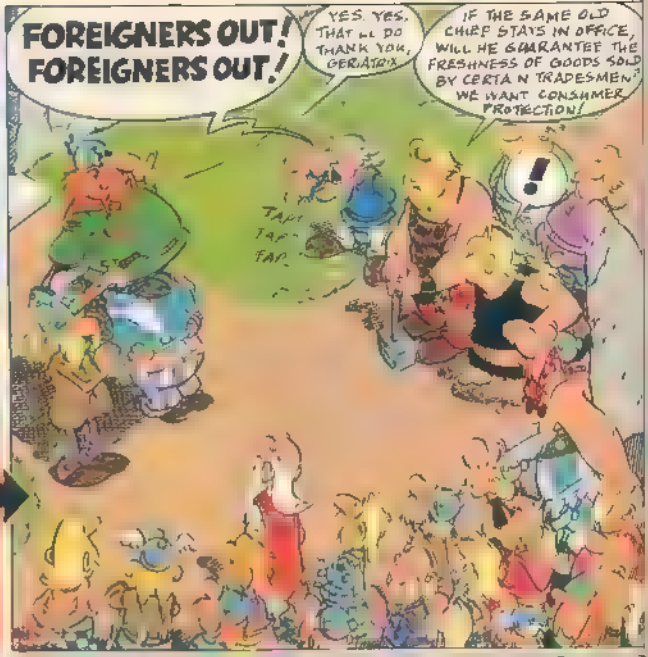
STOP! I'M
OVERCOME ALREADY!
THIS IS A PROTEST...
MARCH!

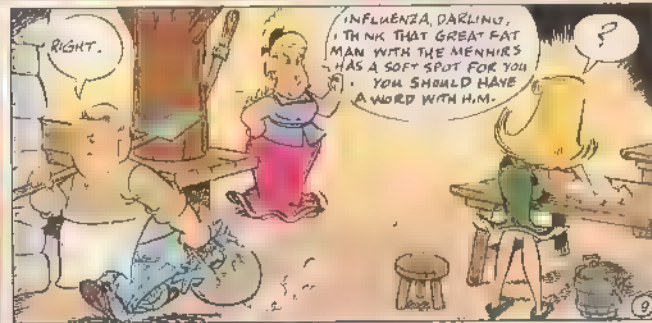
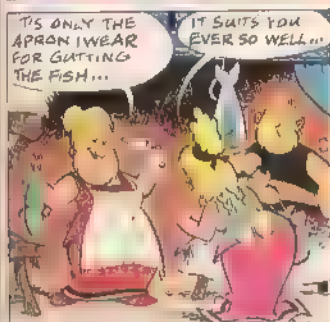
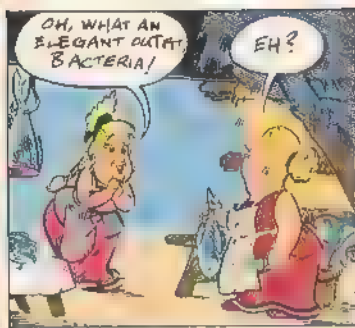
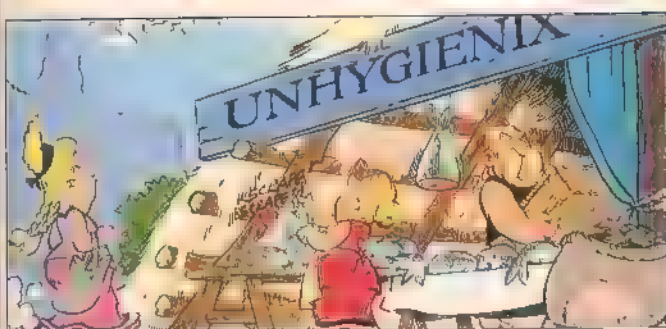
ALL RIGHT,
ORTHOMEDIX
CAN HAVE THE
BENEFIT OF MY
SONG! MAYBE
HE'LL APPRECIATE
IT!!!

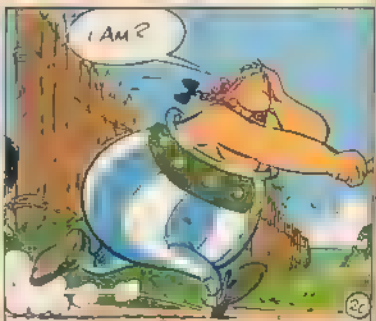
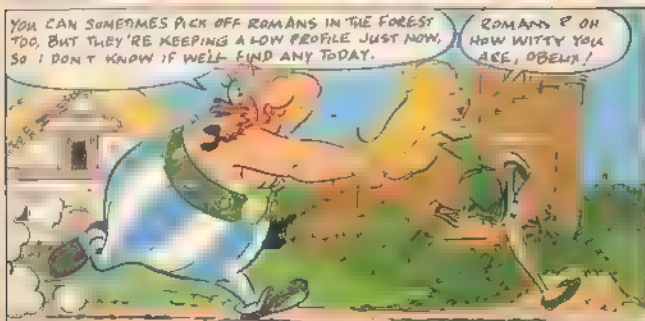
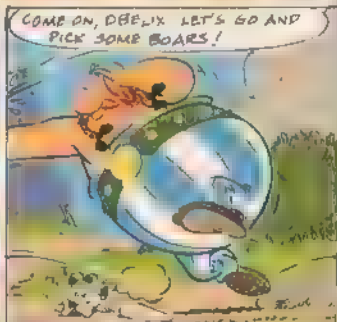
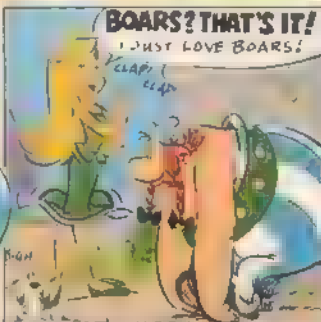
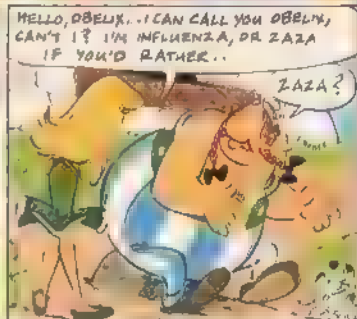
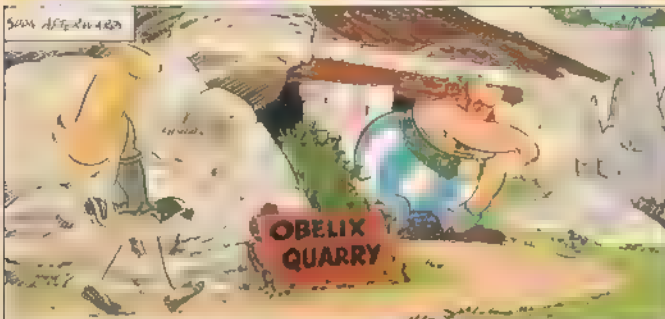
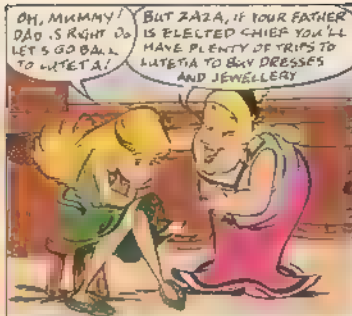
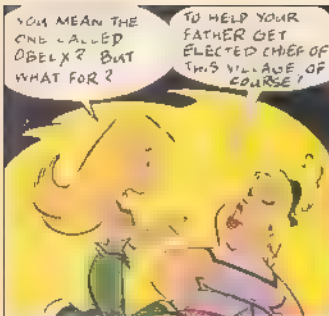
PEDIMENTA, I FEEL WE MAY
HAVE MADE A MISTAKE...
THAT'S ONE PROTEST
WORTH ALREADY!

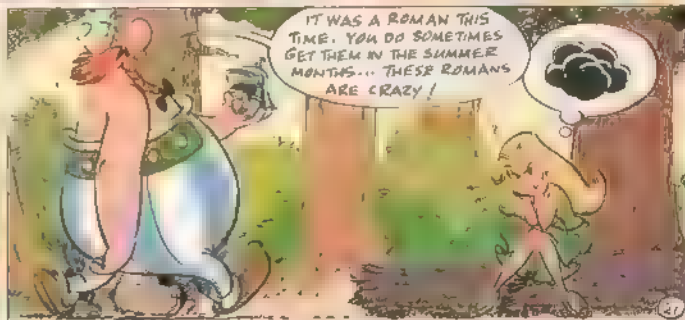
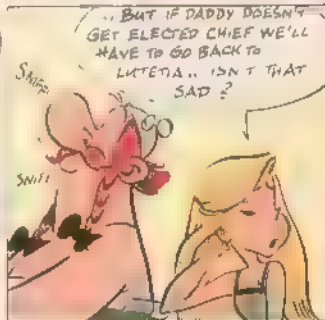
WHY NOT
ADDRESS YOUR
PEOPLE? ROUSE
THEM UP A BIT!

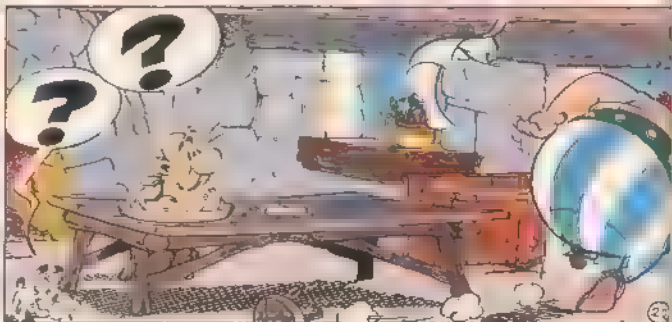
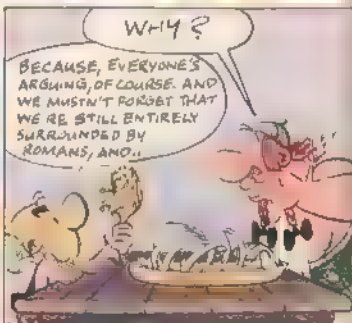
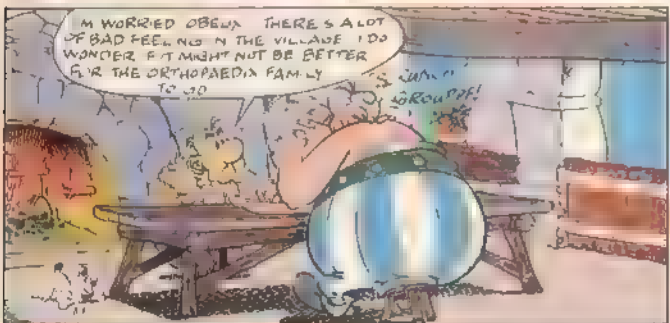
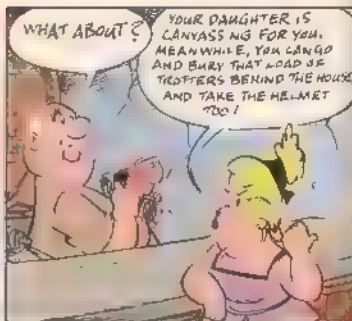
FREEBOM FIGHTERS THE WORLD
OVER OWNE THIS SONG TO CACOPHONY
HE OR G NAL TUNE HAS, OF COURSE,
BEEN EXTENSIVELY REVISED...

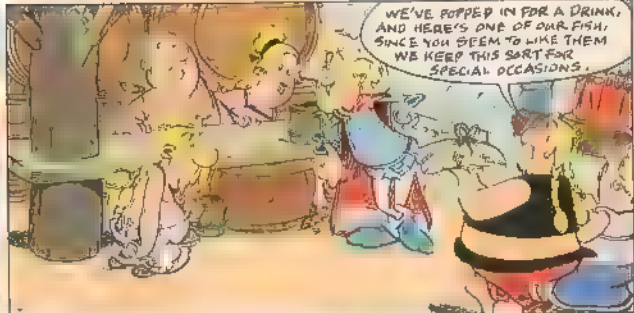
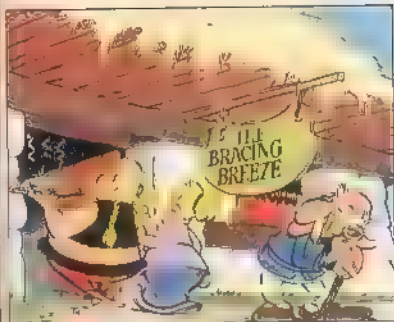


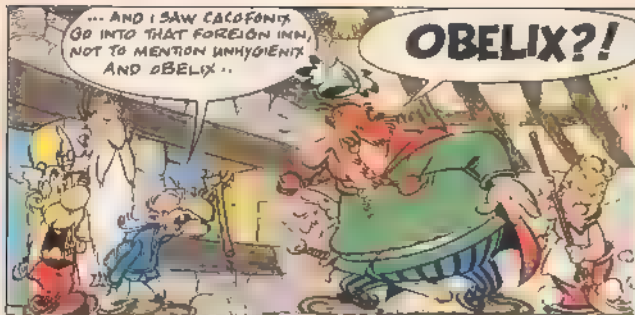






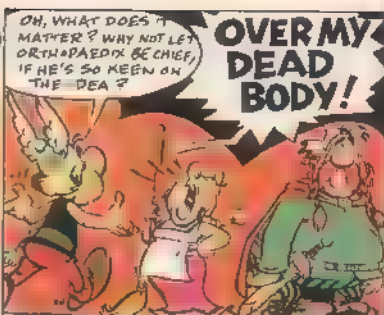






... AND I SAW CACOFONIX
GO INTO THAT FOREIGN INN,
NOT TO MENTION UNHYGIENIX
AND OBELIX ..

OBELIX?!



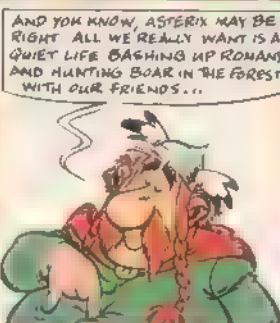
OH, WHAT DOES IT
MATTER? WHY NOT LET
ORTHOPAEDIX BE CHIEF,
IF HE'S SO KEEN ON
THE DEAD?

**OVER MY
DEAD
BODY!**



GIVE IN TO THAT..
THAT USURPER?
NEVER!

IT'S JUST THAT THINGS
AREN'T GOING TOO WELL,
PEDIMENTA DEAR... LOOK
EVEN OBELIX.



AND YOU KNOW, ASTERIX MAY BE
RIGHT. ALL WE REALLY WANT IS A
QUIET LIFE BASHING UP ROMANS
AND HUNTING BOAR IN THE FOREST
WITH OUR FRIENDS...



YOU'RE JUST GIVING IN
BECAUSE YOU'RE SOFT! BUT
WE'VE GOT A SECRET WEAPON:
OUR DRUIDS' MAGIC POTION!
LET'S HAVE A SWIG OF MAGIC
POTION AND FLING THEM
OUT!



NOTHING DOING! THE
MAGIC POTION MAY BE USED
ONLY IN SELF-DEFENCE,
NOT DOMESTIC DISPUTES!



**YOU'RE ALL
SOFTIES! WELL, I
KNOW WHAT TO DO
ABOUT THAT!**



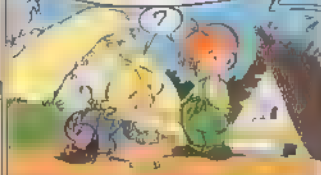
GET A FIX ... WOULD
YOU REALLY REFUSE ME
A DROP OF MAGIC
POTION?

YES, I REALLY
WOULD ... COMING,
ASTERIX?



**ET TU, ASTERIX?
THEN FALL,
VITALSTATISTIX!**

MY FRIENDS.
THESE ARE TROUBLED
TIMES!...

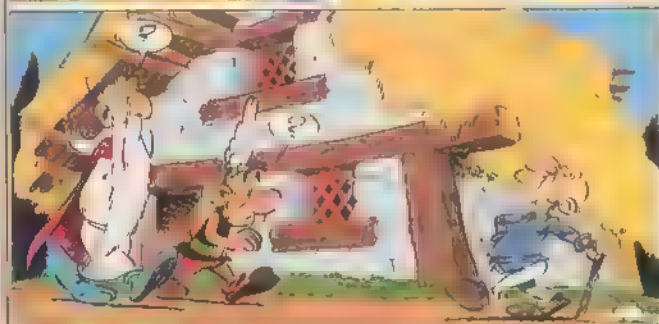


FRIENDS,
I OFFER MYSELF
FOR ELECTION!
AS YOUR CHIEF,
I SHALL BE
ENERGETIC!! TOUGH!
INFLEXI...

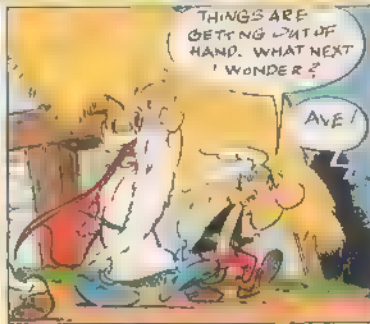


GERIATRIX,
LOVEY, COME ON
HOME! YOU'LL CATCH
YOUR DEATH OF COLD!

WHAT DO WE
SEE CONFRONTING
US? ON THE ONE
HAND, FOREIGNERS
TRYING TO TAKE US
OVER! ON THE OTHER,
A WEAK, APATHETIC
CHIEF!



THINGS ARE
GETTING OUT OF
HAND. WHAT NEXT
I WONDER?



AVE!

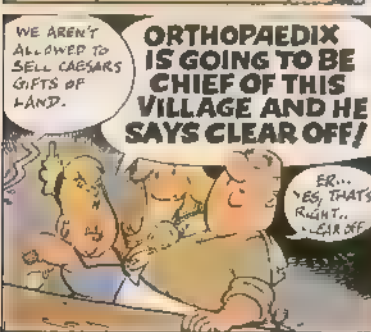
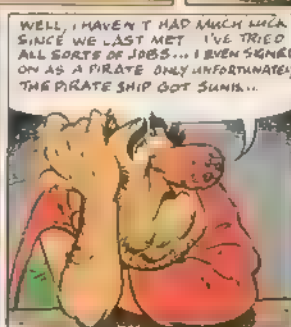
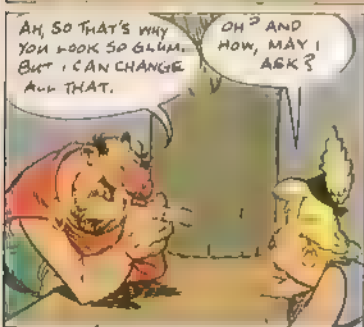
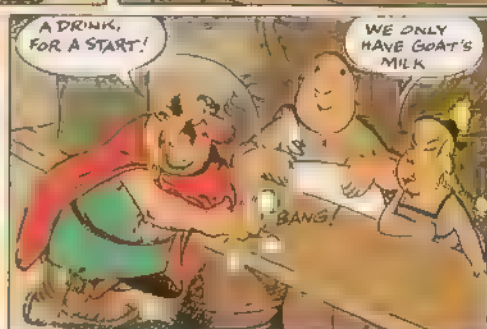
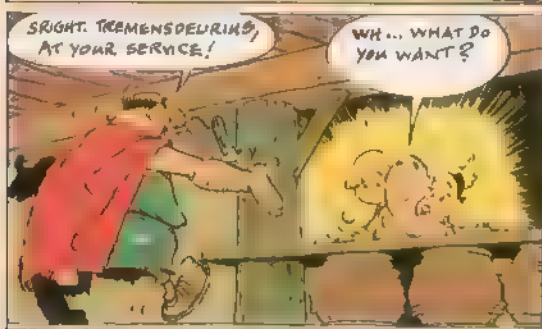
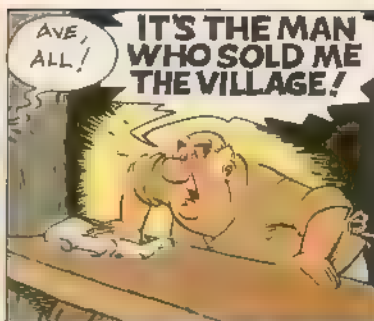
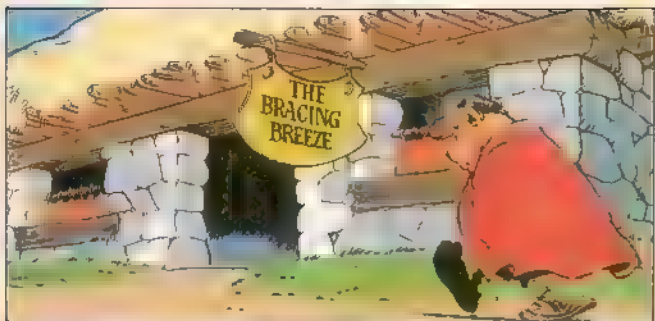
LISTEN, DO YOU
KNOW ANYONE
HEREABOUTS WHO
USED TO KEEP AN
INN AT ARANS?

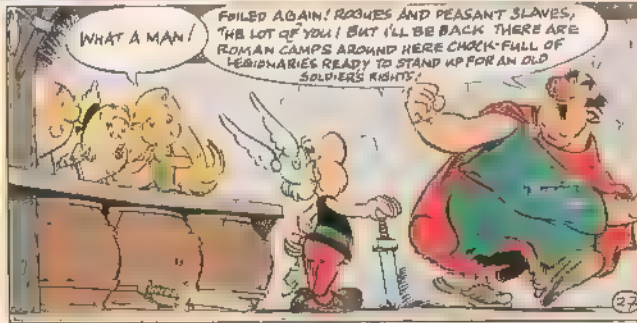
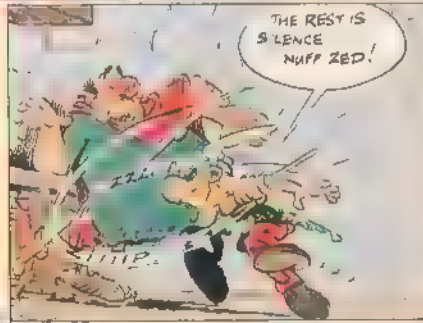
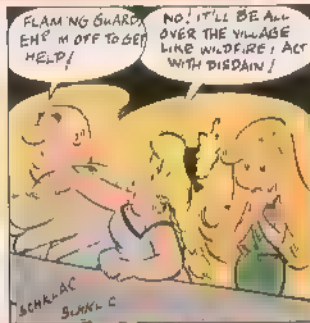
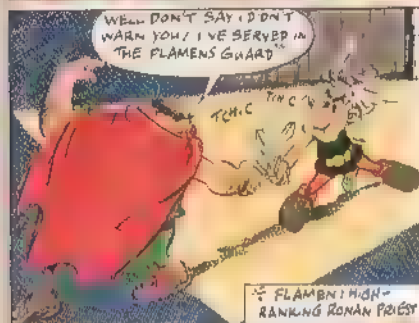
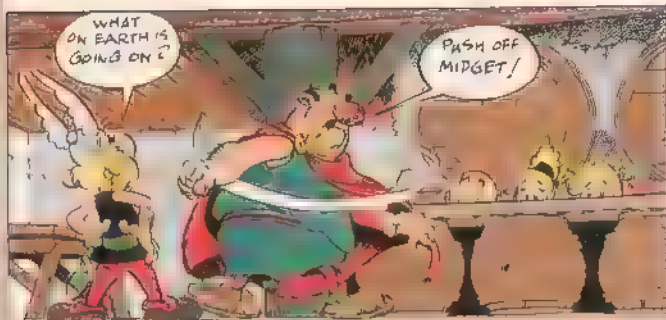
ORTHOPAEDIK?
YES, HE'S LANDLORD
OF THE PUB OVER
THERE.

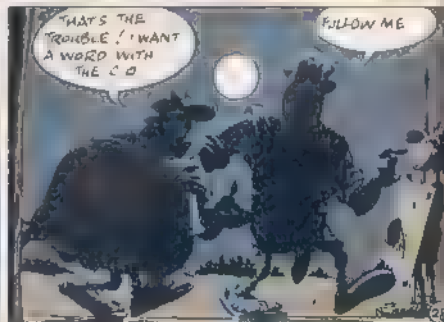
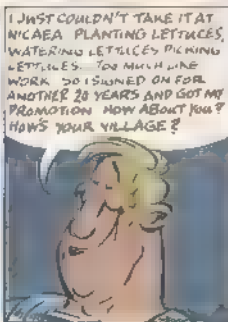
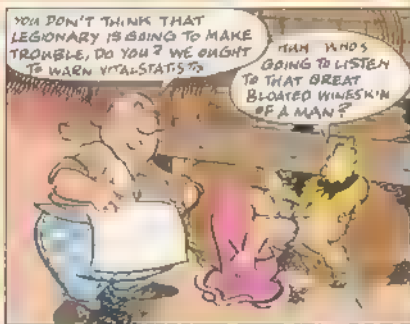
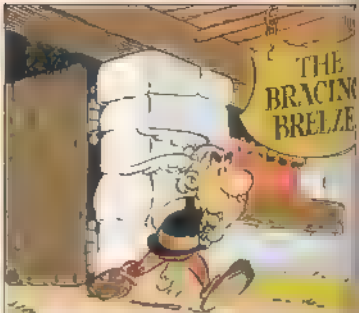
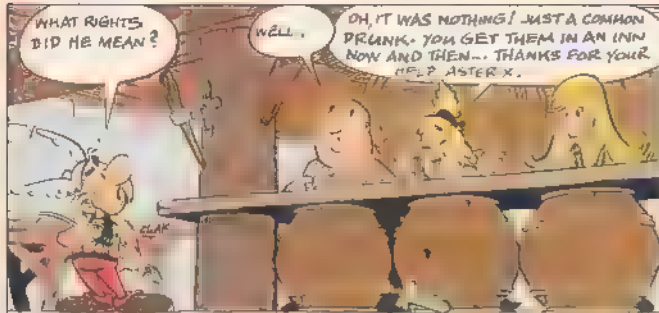


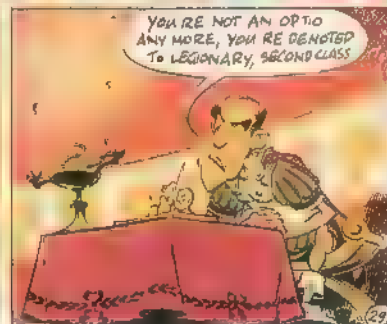
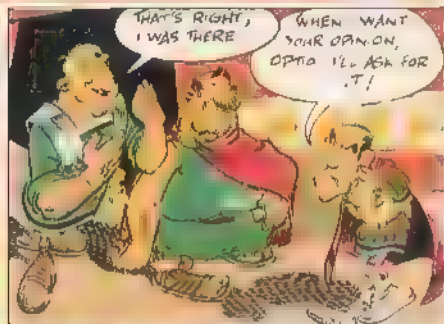
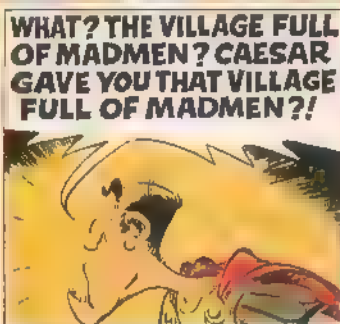
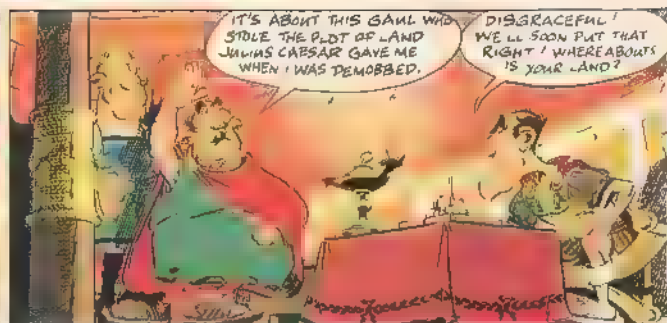
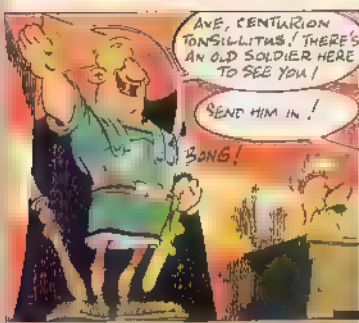
THANKS.

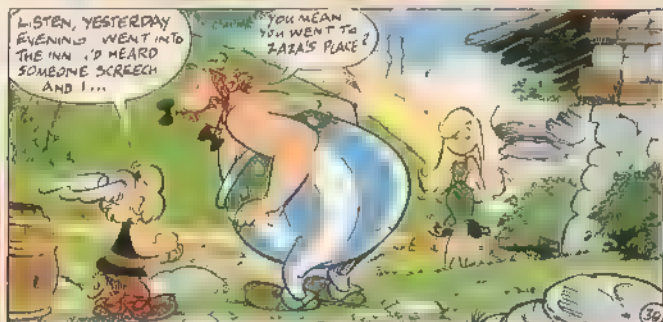
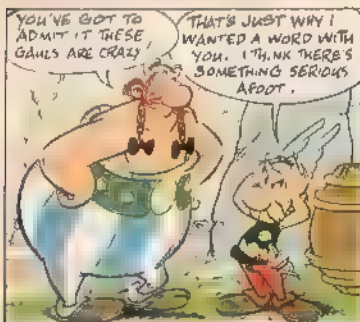
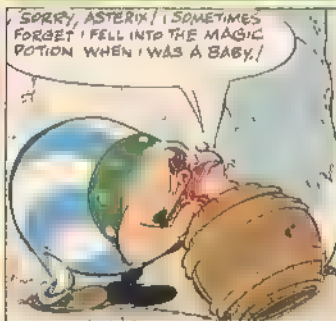
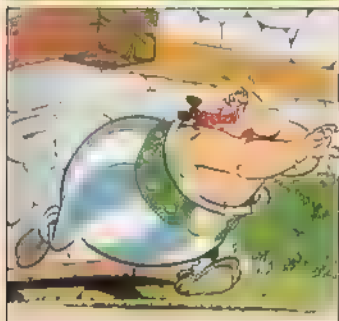
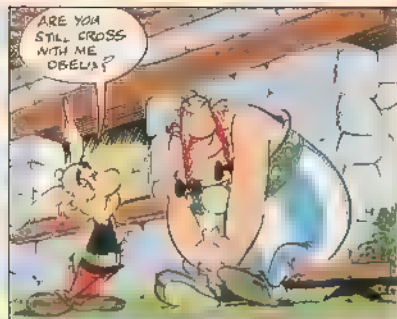
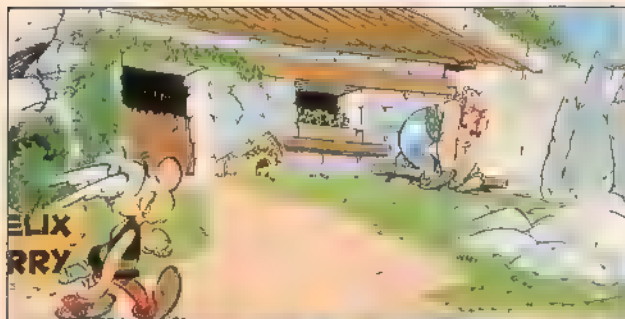


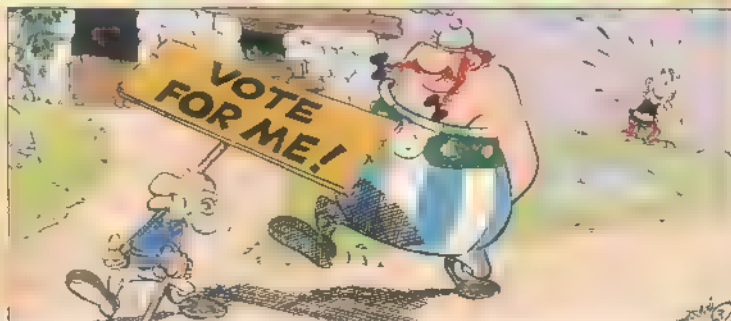
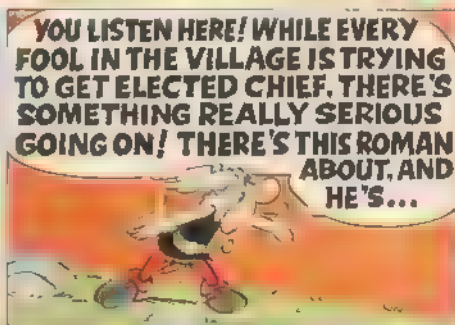
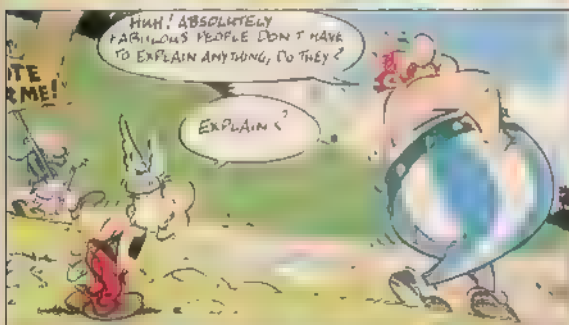
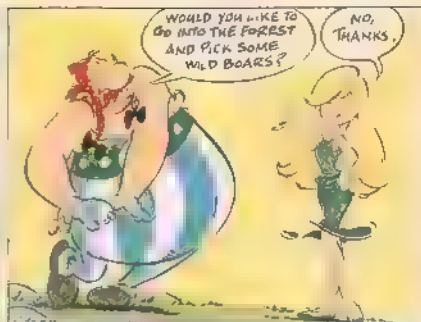


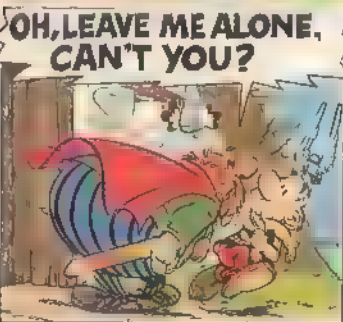
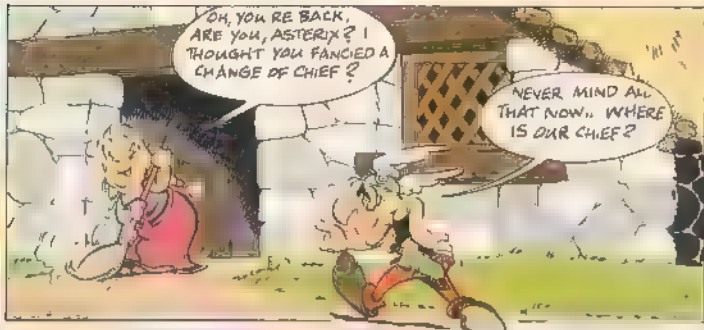


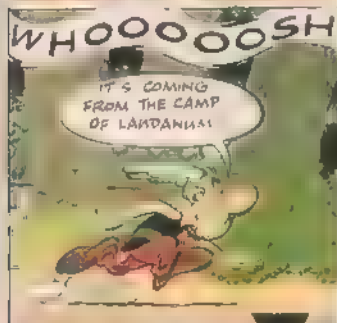


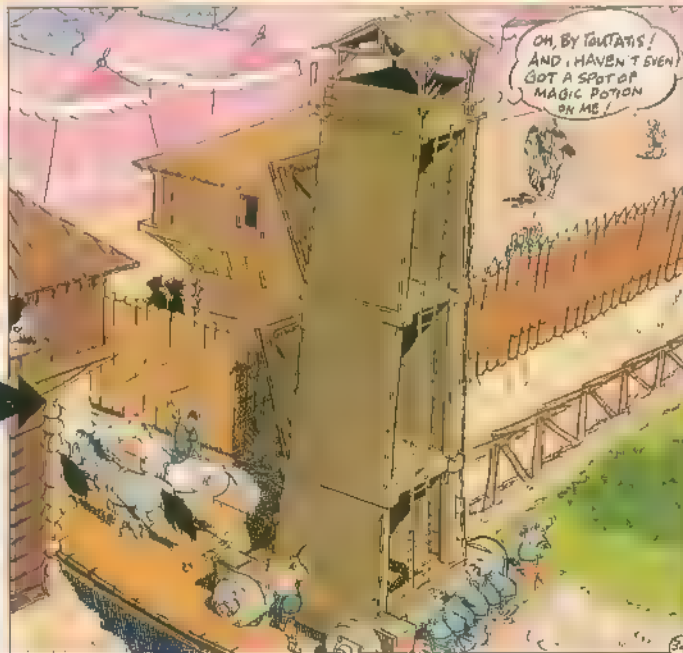
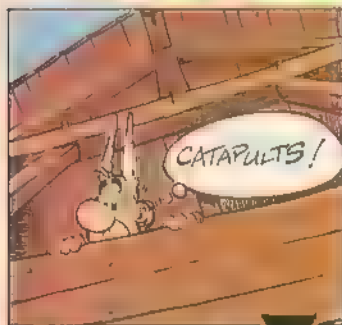
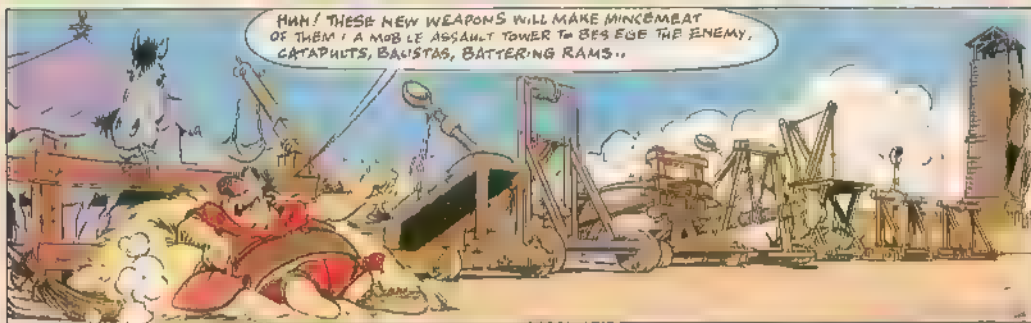
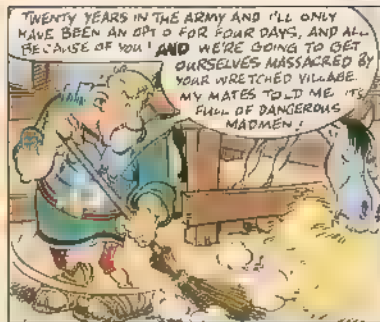
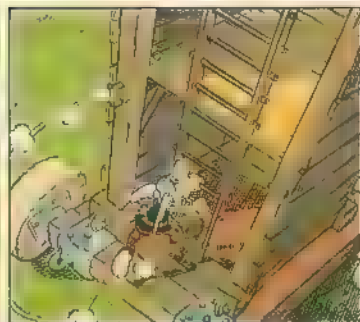












CEN... CEN...
CENTURIOOOON!



**THERE'S SOMEONE UP ON
TOP OF THAT ASSAULT
TOWER! IT LOOKS LIKE A
GAUL! WE'RE BEING
ASSAULTED!**



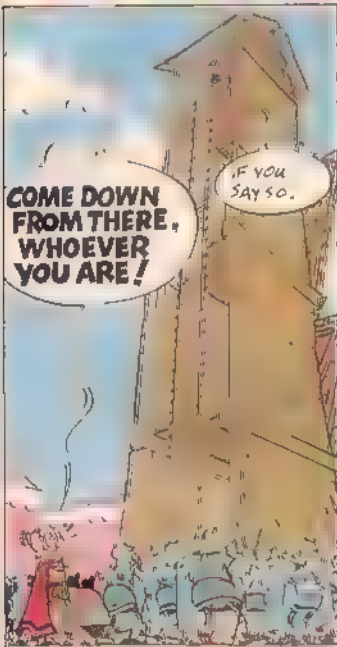
**RAISE THE
ALARM!**



CALM DOWN! WE'VE GOT
ENOUGH PROVISIONS TO
HOLD OUT FOR A LONG,
LONG TIME...

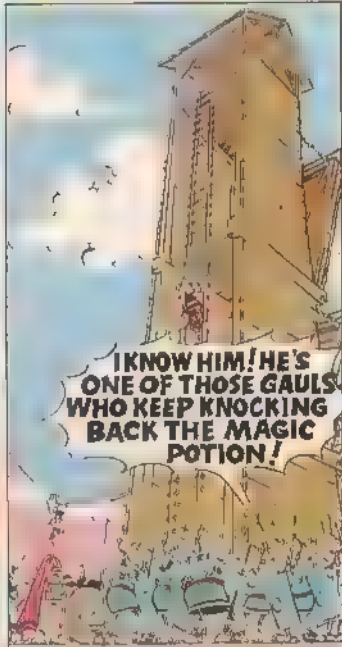


**COME DOWN
FROM THERE,
WHOEVER
YOU ARE!**



IF YOU
SAY SO.

**I KNOW HIM! HE'S
ONE OF THOSE GAULS
WHO KEEP KNOCKING
BACK THE MAGIC
POTION!**



THEY DON'T NOW THINK
YOU'RE OVER-REACTING
A BIT? THERE'S ONLY
ONE OF HIM, AND
YOU...

**YOU FATHEAD,
HE'S FULL OF
MAGIC POTION!**



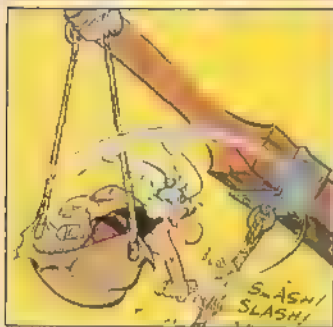
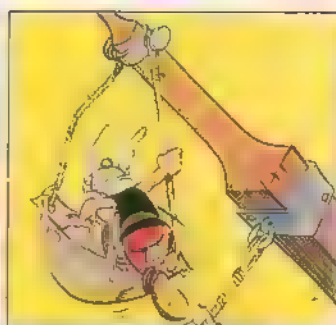
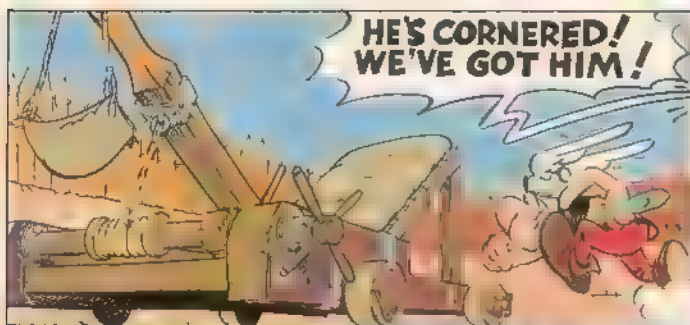
WE GOT TO GET OUT OF
THIS CAMP BEFORE THEY
NOTICE ANYTHING FUNNY!

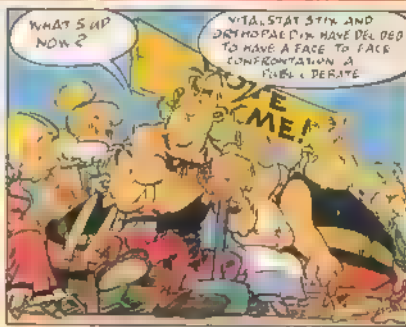
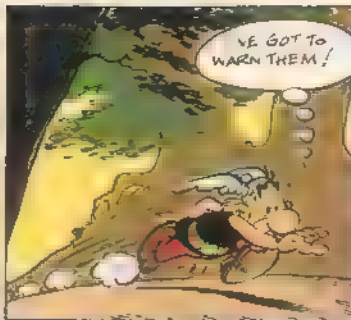


**LOOK... LOOK, HE'S RUNNING!
AND IF HE'S RUNNING FOR IT,
THAT MEANS HE ISN'T FULL OF
MAGIC POTION AFTER ALL!**



CHAAAARGE!





WILL YOU JUST LISTEN TO ME? THE ROMANS... SILENCE! SSH! SIT DOWN! SHUT UP!

OH FOR GOODNESS SAKE!

VC FOR

YOU HAVE BEEN THE CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE FOR A LONG TIME. NOW, WHAT EXACTLY HAVE YOU DONE? HAVE THE HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS OF YOUR PEOPLE BEEN REALIZED? HAS ANY NEW INDUSTRY BEEN CREATED?

RIGHT MY GO. AND IF YOU SO MUCH AS TOUCH THAT EGG-TIMER IT'LL BE THE WORSE FOR YOU!

THIS ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE AN IMPARTIAL JUDGE IS TYPICAL OF SOME PEOPLE'S APPROACH TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

A HIT, A VERY PALPABLE HIT!

A LITTLE DIGNITY, IF YOU PLEASE!

YOU ASK WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR INDUSTRY? I HAVE HERE SOME STATISTICS. THIS YEAR WE HAVE SOLD 111 ANVILS, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 6% ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

YOU CAN MAKE STATISTICS PROVE ANYTHING YOU LIKE.

AND NOW ABOUT BUSINESS? BUSINESS IS ROTTEN! TAKE THE FISH TRADE, FOR INSTANCE...

OH, LET'S BE SERIOUS!

VOTE FOR ME!

HEAR! HEAR!

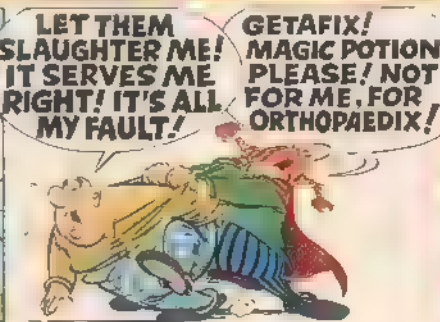
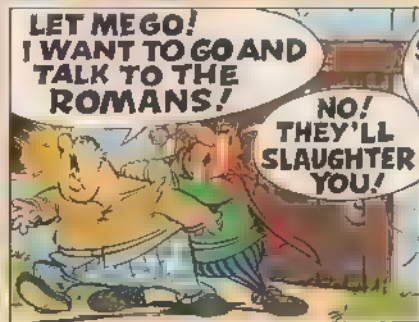
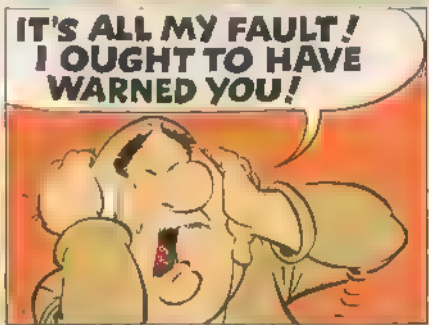
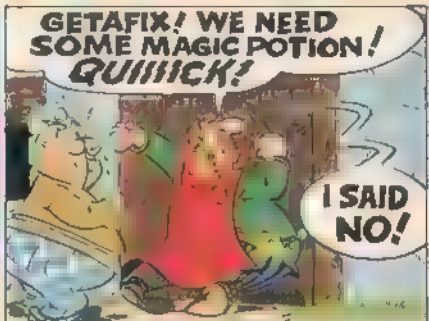
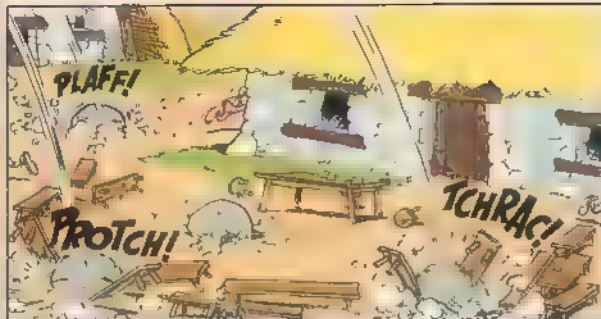
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT I THINK OF YOUR FISH?

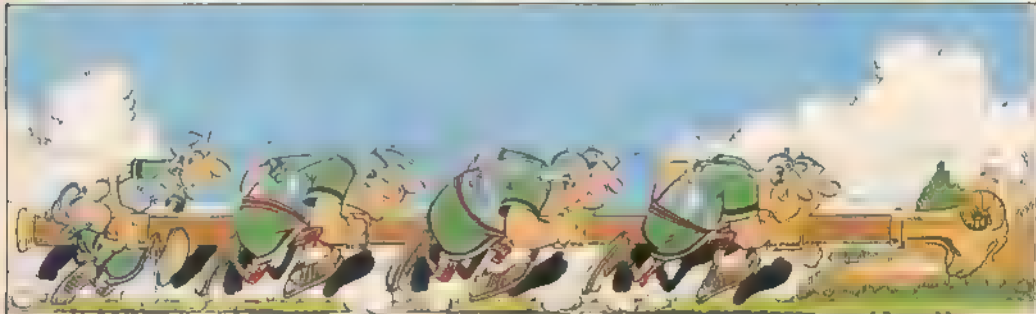
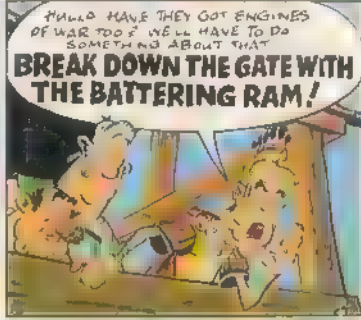
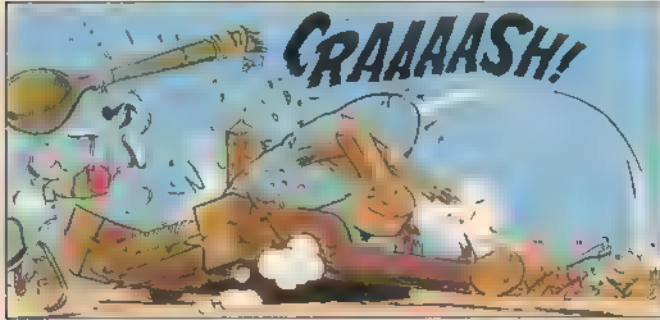
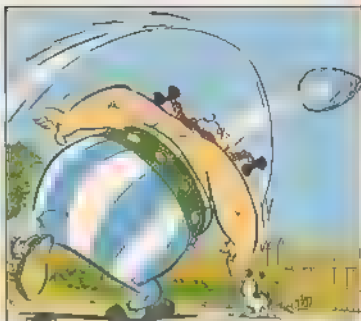
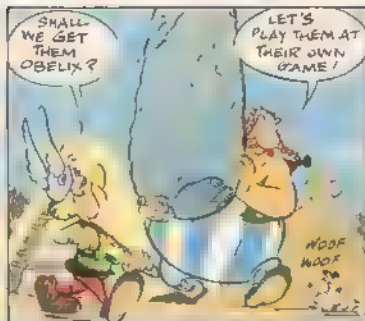
POOOOOSH

OH, CHALK IT UP TO ME! DON'T LET'S CAST THE FIRST STONE!

BRAON!

MADAM, YOU GO TOO FAR!









DON'T HURT ME! I'M A CIVILIAN! IF YOU WANT TO FIGHT, GO AND FIGHT THE SOLDIERS! FIGHT MY FRIEND OVER THERE ... HE RE-ENLISTED!



I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU, FAR FROM IT. I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU BACK YOUR PROPERTY ...

Caesar's Gift!



SO NOW ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX AND HIS MEN!



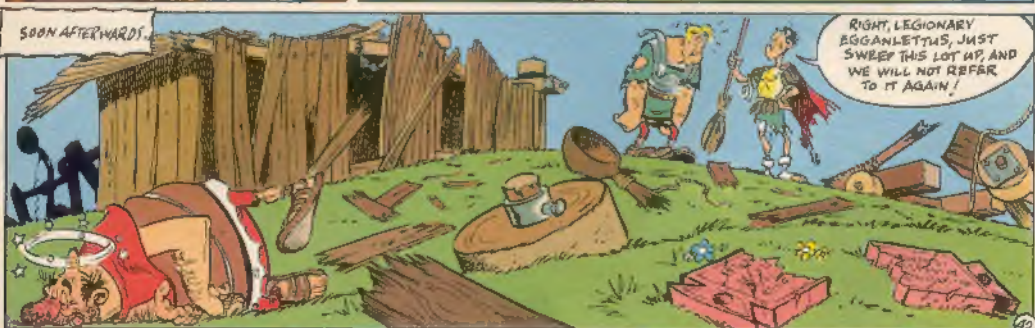
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! YOU WOULDN'T DO A THING LIKE THAT TO AN OLD FRIEND, WOULD YOU?



COME ON, LET'S GO HOME!



SOON AFTERWARDS...



RIGHT, LEGIONARY EGGANLETTUS, JUST SWEEP THIS LOT UP, AND WE WILL NOT REFER TO IT AGAIN!

I THINK YOU'LL MAKE
THE VILLAGE A REALLY
GOOD CHIEF...

BUT I DON'T
WANT TO BE CHIEF
AT ALL!

ANYWAY, I DON'T THINK THIS
PEACEFUL COUNTRY LIFE SUITS
ME... I'M A LUTETIAN BORN
AND BRED, AFTER ALL!

BUT
ORTHOPAEDIX...

**SILENCE! I SAID WE'RE
GOING BACK TO LUTETIA!
THAT WAS WHAT YOU
WANTED WASN'T IT?**

I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL
THAT GREAT FLABBY LUMP
DITHYRAMBIX ALL
ABOUT THIS!

OH,
GODDY,
DAD!

WELL THEN,
LET'S HAVE A
PARTY!

COME ALONG,
ANGINA, I'LL
SHOW YOU OUR
LOCAL RECIPE
FOR BOAR.

DOWN SOUTH WHERE WE
LIVED THEY APO A LOT OF
HERBS... I BROUGHT SOME
WITH ME. THEY REALLY DO
BRING OUT THE
FLAVOUR.

YOU LIKE
LUTETIA, DO
YOU, ANGINA?

OH YES, IMPEDIMENTA,
AND MY SISTER LIVES
THERE TOO.

FANCY THAT!
I'VE GOT A
BROTHER IN
LUTETIA,
MY DEAR!

OH, YOU REALLY
MUST GIVE ME HIS
ADDRESS,
MY DEAR!

**VOTE
FOR ME!**

WHAT
ABOUT ME,
THEN?

OH,
BOTHER!



IN FACT, EVERYONE IS FRIENDS AGAIN.
UNDER THE STARRY SKY, ALL PARTIES
ARE RE-UNITED AROUND THE TABLE.
ALL PARTIES... FOR WE MUST NOT
FORGET THAT THIS HAPPENED VERY
LONG AGO, ABOUT 50 BC, AND
IN THOSE DAYS SUCH MATTERS
WERE NOT SO VERY IMPORTANT...

